(d) Successful implementation of the Scheme requires a high level participation of the community. Consequently Watershed Associations, Watershed Committees, User Groups, Self-Helf Groups have been constituted for the implementation of projects under the Scheme. The progress of various projects is also monitored from time to time at the State and Central level. The State Governments/ District Rural Development Agencies/Zilla Parishads/Regional Institutes are frequently requested by the Government of India to involve the local communities and the Panchayat Raj Institutions in implementation of the scheme in an effective manner.

Direct financial assistance to Panchayati Raj institutions

884. SHRI CO. POULOSE: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken decision to give direct financial assistance to Panchayati Raj institutions, instead of routing it through the State Governments; and

(b) if so, what are the reasons behind this decision?

THE MINISTER OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI SUNDAR LAL PATWA): (a) Yes Sir. As per the current guidelines, 100% of the allocated funds under Employment Assurance Scheme (EAS) and Jawahar Gram Samridhi Yojana (JGSY) are released to the Panchayati Raj Institutions through the District Rural Development Agencies/Zilla Parishads.

(b) Article 243G (b) of the Constitution of India envisages that Panchayats would be empowered to implement schemes for economic development and social justice as may be entrusted to them including those in relation to the matters listed in the Eleventh Schedule. The implementation of rural development schemes through Panchayati Raj institutions is expected to encourage people's participation and their implementation and review as per local needs. Quick transfer of funds to the grassroots level is one of the reasons.